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27 August 1963

NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

MEMORANDUM FOR: Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

SUBJECT: Review of the Amount of Satellite
Photography (KH-4) Being Acquired

1. The Acting Director of Central Intelligence requested the Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance to review the amount of satellite photography being acquired, looking toward an evaluation on whether for any reasons this amount exceeds our needs or goes beyond the necessary satisfaction of our requirements.
2. The COMOR has made such a review. Its findings and its recommendation on this question are set forth in the attached paper.

JAMES S. LAY, JR.
Executive Secretary

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**Review of the Amount of Satellite Photography (KH-4)
Being Acquired**

1. The COMOR has conducted a review of the amount of satellite photography recently acquired and attempted to project on the basis of past experience the likelihood of successes in the future and the quantitative as well as qualitative effects of such success on the intelligence community's exploitation and research processes.

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In this review, COMOR has excluded consideration of the KH-6 [redacted] because the missions to date have been essentially R&D in nature. In addition,

[redacted] has been excluded since its purposes are not principally the collection of intelligence information but rather information for specific geodetic and mapping programs.

25X1

2. The COMOR has reviewed recent history on KH coverage. It notes first of all that, after review of a schedule submitted by NRO on 24 January, it requested revision of the NRO 1963 schedule to insure one J in May and June, 2 in July, 1 in August, 2 in September, and 1 in each of the 3 remaining months of the year. This scheduling became the official USIB recommendation in USIB-D-41. 14/7 (COMOR-D-48/21) of 11 February 1963. Since February there has been slippage in the schedule. In July, Dr. McMillan submitted a revised schedule which was confirmed on 18 July by USIB-D-41. 15/14 (COMOR-D-48/42) of 18 July 1963. This

2

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schedule called for the first J to be fired on 29 July, the second on 30 August, the third on 17 September, the fourth on 27 September, the fifth on 15 October, and the sixth on 24 October. The seventh and eighth J packages were scheduled for November and December. There has been further slippage in the program since that time. The first J was fired last Saturday; the second and third are due to go on 10 and 23 September, respectively; the fourth, 15 October; the fifth and sixth on 11 and 14 November; and the seventh on 14 December. The firing of 2 Js in September is, of course, in accordance with the original plan as is the firing of one in October and one in December. The principal anomaly is that the 2 Js originally scheduled for the good weather month of September have now slipped to November. (The 2 now scheduled for September were, of course, originally slated to go in July.)

Coverage Obtained of Known ICBM Complexes

3. Current COMOR Agreed Frequency of Search Coverage:
In COMOR-D-13/4, a paper not yet approved by the Board but on which NRO comments are awaited, contains an agreed view in para 5e, page 7:

Search coverage of the buildup area of the Communist Bloc, approximately 6,000,000 square miles every 45 days, and coverage of the remainder every 90 days represents the Board's maximum foreseeable requirement for search.

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Coverage set forth in the 2 foregoing paragraphs may be equated to have satisfied this requirement either in terms of the last year or the period since April.

4. In the light of past experience, COMOR would call attention to the following considerations which need to be borne in mind in evaluating whether the frequency of coverage is in excess of our needs:

a. The effects of weather. Coverage of specific targets, either partial or total, is not predictable except that experience shows that rarely is a target covered on a single mission with sufficient clarity to meet all requirements bearing on it.

b. Whereas it does not follow that all ICBM targets, for example needed to be covered in any given 45-day period, the net collection from our missions to date shows that coverage of ICBM targets on the order of recent successes ^{is necessary} to keep close account on trends in construction and changes in particular sites with regard to hardening or expansion.

5. Conclusion: In the light of the foregoing analysis and taking into account the schedule for the J program for the remainder of this year. COMOR does not believe that the amount of satellite photography being

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acquired and anticipated is greatly in excess of our requirements needs. In reaching this conclusion, COMOR is primarily basing its judgment on the, at present, unsettled questions as to the actual reliability of the J program as against the prediction that in essence it should be as reliable as the KH-4. However, should 1001 through 1004 achieve success approximating the MUREAL programs, consideration should be given to the need for 3 during November and December.

6. Recommendation: That the Board at this time take no action with regard to reducing the amount of satellite photography planned for the balance of the year; but that the Board require of the COMOR a re-evaluation of the November-December schedule during October, preferably after the launch of 1004.

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